

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Summary of Public Involvement Efforts

Public opinion was heard through a variety of mediums - state legislation and regulation, trends in public resource protection, local measures to protect and conserve dwindling resources throughout the state, a questionnaire, press release and direct public contact.

A press release summarizing the draft Assessment of Need and indicating how to obtain a copy was issued to all daily and weekly newspapers and radio and television stations in Washington State. As a result, one radio station requested an interview (aired September 16, and thirty-four telephone inquiries were made. Thirty-two draft Assessment Of Need reports were requested and sent out.

A broad range of 265 stakeholders were surveyed by direct mail for their opinions about the Forest Legacy Program. Details about the Questionnaire and a summary of the response will be found on the following pages. Public opinion expressed through this survey was used to determine eligibility criteria and focused attention to the proposed Forest Legacy Area. Those surveyed were invited to request a copy of the draft Assessment of Need; nine telephone calls were received about the questionnaire, three requested and were sent the draft Assessment of Need. Overall response rate was 70 percent. Respondents were invited to request a summary of questionnaire results. Sixty-nine requests were received; summaries were sent on October 14, 1993.

In addition, public input was involved in the planning stages of similar programs, and helped form the Forest Legacy Program in Washington State. These earlier programs underwent in-depth public hearings before their adoption and for any amendments or revisions they have undergone since. The following programs and their public involvement processes were utilized to evaluate public need and support for the Forest Legacy Program:

Washington State Growth Management Program

Department of Community Development - Growth Management Division,

King County Comprehensive Plan

Division of Planning and Community Development,

Snoqualmie Valley Community Plan and Area Zoning Proposed

King County Planning and Community Development Division, April 1988.

Future Public Involvement Plans

Once the Secretary of Agriculture approves the proposed Forest Legacy Area, the Department will expand public involvement within the Forest Legacy Area to include:

- a press release announcing Secretary's approval of the Forest Legacy Area;
- a public meeting within Area boundaries to explain the program, Area boundaries, and to solicit landowner participation;
- meetings with all tribes who have treaty rights within the Area (in progress);
- meetings with county land use planners (in progress); and
- meetings with local land trusts' (in progress).

The Department of Natural Resources surveyed representatives of environmental organizations, land use planners, industrial and non-industrial forest landowners, Native American tribes and tribal organizations, state resource agencies, and State Stewardship Coordinating Committee members for their opinion about a Washington State Forest Legacy Program. They were asked for help in establishing program priorities based on environmental, social and economic values related to forest resources.

Forest Legacy Stewardship Subcommittee

By motion of the State Stewardship Coordinating Committee, a subcommittee was formed to address Legacy issues. The Subcommittee was involved in drafting the final questionnaire and determining who to send it to.

Questionnaire results and public comments were shared with the Subcommittee. They analyzed the results and determined that public opinion was consistent with Forest Legacy Program goals, and made recommendations to the full Committee based on those opinions.

Following are the recommendations the Committee endorsed and passed on to the State Forester, highlights of the questionnaire results, and a detailed look at the results to each question.

State Stewardship Coordinating Committee Recommendations

Recommended Forest Legacy Area:

Forest Legacy Area(s) should be defined by physical, rather than political boundaries.

Due to limited funds, survey results, and the desire move forward with this program, the subcommittee recommends one Forest Legacy Area, with the understanding other areas can be appended to the Assessment of Need if program funds and public interest warrant it.

Area description: All privately owned forest lands within Skagit, Snohomish, King, Pierce and Thurston Counties, bounded by the northern edge of the Stillaquamish watershed, the southern edge of the Nisqually watershed, to the Puget Sound or western county boundaries, and east to the designated long-term commercial resource lands. The Area map will omit urban growth areas, and other lands that don't qualify for the program.

Recommended Value Priorities:

Water quality
Habitat for fish, other wildlife and/or important plant communities
Timber management opportunity

A parcel must have all three values present to qualify for the program.

Recommended Role of Stewardship Coordinating Committee and The Forest Legacy Subcommittee

All Committee members will have the opportunity to comment on changes to the Assessment of Need.

The Subcommittee will review comments on the final draft, make recommendations to Department Forestry Assistance staff, and, on behalf of the full Stewardship Coordinating Committee, recommend the State Forester submit the Assessment of Need to the USDA Forest Service.

Recommended Criteria for Selection of Parcels

The Committee opposes using a numerical ranking system to choose one parcel over another. They recommend the subcommittee approve yes/no questions based on the criteria present in the draft Assessment of Need. Questions should enable a landowner to make an educated guess about whether or not their property will qualify for the program.

The Committee agrees that a yes/no decision based system will screen out the least appealing parcels; and that site visits and landowner presentations may be used to help choose among the choice parcels.

The Stewardship Coordinating Committee voted to endorse all of these recommendations.

Forest Legacy Questionnaire Highlights

Questionnaires were sent to:

<u># SENT</u>	<u>RECIPIENTS</u>	<u>% RETURN</u>
100	Non-industrial forest land owners	62
20	Forest Industry Reps (WFPA members)	70
25	Tribes/organizations	56
21	Environmental groups	62
18	Land Trust organizations	77
39	County Planners	69
25	Stewardship Committee members	92
17	Others (interested in program)	70

OVERALL RESPONSE RATE: 70%

(A total of 265 questionnaires were mailed out; three were undeliverable, for an adjusted total of 262 questionnaires sent. 185 questionnaires were returned for a response rate of 70%.)

PRIORITY VALUES

We asked readers to indicate the level of importance they felt each of 15 values had for choosing among parcels offered to the Forest Legacy Program. The top seven values chosen were:

- protecting water quality
- protecting fisheries habitat
- protecting wildlife habitat
- conserving forested lands that provide habitat
for unique, sensitive, threatened or endangered species
- preserving forest related wetlands
- retaining forested lands for present and/or
future timber production
- conserving highly productive soils

We then asked respondents to choose their first and second priority values for inclusion in the program. Numbers given are actual, not percentages.

<u>VALUE</u>	<u>#1</u>	<u>#2</u>
Water Quality	44	36
Timber production	28	12
Wildlife habitat	27	23
Habitat for S,T&E species	26	26
Fish habitat	19	27
Scenic views	11	12

Respondents were asked to choose between statements of the most important program objective:

More than twice as many people thought the most important objective should be to acquire forest lands having unique qualities with less consideration given for numbers of acres.

Respondents were asked to list their top priority counties for inclusion in the program:
(points explained in summary attachment)

COUNTY	TOTAL POINTS
King	274
Snohomish	223
Pierce	199

Skagit was the next highest county with 115 points, substantially below Pierce.

IMPORTANT NOTE: The Department received numerous responses saying that political boundaries were not appropriate for this program, and that Forest Legacy Areas should be based on watersheds, functional ecosystems, critical areas, or some other physical/natural boundary.

Note: numbers given are actual, not percentages, unless otherwise noted

FOREST LEGACY QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS 9/27/93

- 1) Listed below are some social, economic and environmental values threatened by conversion of forest lands in Washington State. Please indicate the level of importance you feel each of the values listed below has for choosing among parcels offered to the Forest Legacy Program. CIRCLE 1 NUMBER FOR EACH VALUE.

	IMPORTANCE			
	VERY	MODERATE	SLIGHT	NOT AT ALL
a. preserving scenic views that are visible to many people	57	80	34	5
b. protecting fisheries habitat	138	35	8	0
c. protecting wildlife habitat	129	42	9	0
d. protecting geologic features	38	75	58	8
e. conserving minerals	21	55	74	27
f. conserving highly productive soils	78	70	27	5
g. protecting water quality	148	31	3	0
h. protecting cultural and archeological sites	58	74	40	12
i. promoting "green" corridors between public forest lands	70	65	29	16
j. retaining forested lands for present and/or future timber production	78	70	24	7
k. providing public access for fishing and hunting	32	64	60	24
l. providing public access for recreation other than hunting and fishing	37	74	49	20
m. conserving forested lands that provide habitat for unique, sensitive, threatened, or endangered species	113	38	22	8
n. preserving forest related wetlands	101	45	25	9

o. other(s): please list: Many people made suggestions along the lines of protecting biological diversity, ecosystem health, protecting critical areas and entire watersheds. A few commented that "green corridors" were a priority if they were to protect wildlife habitat, not a priority if they were for view. Other suggested values included: preserve private property rights, provide migration corridors, winter range lands, forests along freeways, buffers or access to existing state park lands, natural areas for schools to study, low elevation forest lands, protect streams and lakes from housing developments, protect jobs.

- 2) Do you prefer the Forest Legacy Program focus on protecting a few specific values, or a broad range of values? CIRCLE ONE NUMBER BELOW

79 FEW SPECIFIC VALUES

70 BROAD RANGE OF VALUES

11 NO OPINION

- 3) Of the values listed in question one, list the two you think should receive the highest priority and second highest priority for inclusion in the Forest Legacy Program. LIST ONE LETTER FROM QUESTION ONE IN EACH BOX:

	#1	#2
g. water quality	44	36
j. present and future timber production	28	12
b. wildlife habitat	27	23
m. provide habitat for S T & E species	26	26
c. fisheries habitat	19	27
a. scenic views	11	12
f. productive soils	6	10
i. "green" corridors	3	8
k. public access fish/hunt	2	3
n. forest related wetlands	1	9
h. cultural & archeological sites	1	4
l. public access for other recreation	0	4
d. geologic features	0	1
e. minerals	0	0

- 4) Given limited funds, on which of the following forest lands should we concentrate our efforts? CIRCLE ONE NUMBER BELOW:

67 FEWER ACRES THAT ARE IMMEDIATELY THREATENED BY CONVERSION TO NON-FOREST USES

98 MORE ACRES THAT ARE NOT IMMEDIATELY THREATENED, BUT ARE LIKELY TO BE THREATENED IN THE FUTURE BY CONVERSION TO NON-FOREST USES.

12 NO OPINION

- 5) USING THE MAP BELOW, LIST THE TOP FIVE COUNTIES YOU THINK SHOULD HAVE PRIORITY AS DESIGNATED FOREST LEGACY AREAS:

See next page

WHY DID YOU SELECT YOUR FIRST PRIORITY?

Most respondents chose counties based on amount of forest land being converted, lack of local protection for forest resource lands, desire to protect outstanding forests or loyalty to their home county. Many people said natural, rather than political, boundaries should determine Forest Legacy Areas.

- 6) Should lands within counties that are in compliance with Growth Management Act guidelines be given priority as Forest Legacy Areas? CIRCLE ONE NUMBER:

79 YES

54 NO

42 NO OPINION

- 7) CIRCLE THE NUMBER OF THE STATEMENT BELOW THAT BEST DESCRIBES YOUR OPINION:

43 THE MOST IMPORTANT OBJECTIVE IN THE FOREST LEGACY PROGRAM IS TO ACQUIRE THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF FOREST ACRES, WITH LESS CONSIDERATION FOR UNIQUE QUALITIES.

118 THE MOST IMPORTANT OBJECTIVE IN THE FOREST LEGACY PROGRAM IS TO ACQUIRE FOREST LANDS HAVING UNIQUE QUALITIES, WITH LESS CONSIDERATION GIVEN TO NUMBER OF ACRES

9 NO OPINION

- 8) Which category best describes you? CIRCLE ONE NUMBER:

27 NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGER

74 FOREST LANDOWNER

13 REPRESENTATIVE OF A TRIBE

28 MUNICIPAL/COUNTY PLANNER

14 REPRESENTATIVE OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATION

17 REPRESENTATIVE OF A LAND TRUST

8 OTHER (Please describe): forestry consultant, educator(s), state agency rep., state planner, eco sanity advocate, volunteer, RC&D Forestry Committee

5) LIST OF COUNTIES RESPONDENTS THOUGHT SHOULD HAVE PRIORITY AS DESIGNATED FOREST LEGACY AREAS

Priority Counties	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	TOTAL POINTS
King	42	9	5	4	5	274
Snohomish	11	21	15	17	5	223
Pierce	8	22	19	4	6	199
Skagit	2	12	7	13	11	115
Okanogan	7	6	3	8	10	105
Whatcom	7	4	3	11	16	98
Clallam	12	3	2	7	1	93
Jefferson	5	12	2	4	6	93
Stevens	5	6	7	4	2	88
Kitsap	4	5	8	8	3	83
Thurston	3	4	11	6	7	83
Ferry	4	6	7	1	1	76
Chelan	5	2	6	8	2	69
Pend Oreille	5	5	3	2	5	63
Grays Harbor	4	2	10	0	3	61
Lewis	5	1	4	1	5	50
Cowlitz	3	4	1	4	1	43
Kittitas	2	2	5	7	1	40
Spokane	4	2	2	2	1	39
San Juan	4	0	4	0	2	37
Clark	2	3	0	2	6	32
Island	2	1	2	0	3	23

Note: Each vote for a #1 priority, earned a county five points, a #2 earned four points, #3 earned three points, #4 earned two points and fifth priority earned one point.

Remaining counties had even fewer votes

9) NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS BY COUNTY OF RESIDENCE

1 ADAMS
 1 ASOTIN
 3 BENTON
 4 CHELAN
 6 CLALLAM
 5 CLARK
 1 COLUMBIA
 9 COWLITZ
 1 DOUGLAS
 5 FERRY
 0 FRANKLIN
 0 GARFIELD
 3 GRANT
 4 GRAYS HARBOR
 3 ISLAND
 2 JEFFERSON
 23 KING
 5 KITSAP
 1 KITTITAS
 1 KLUCKITAT
 7 LEWIS
 0 LINCOLN
 5 MASON
 5 OKANOGAN
 2 PACIFIC
 1 PEND OREILLE
 7 PIERCE
 4 SAN JUAN
 6 SKAGIT
 0 SKAMANIA
 6 SNOHOMISH
 18 SPOKANE
 12 STEVENS
 15 THURSTON
 0 WAHIAKUM
 3 WALLA WALLA
 8 WHATCOM
 2 WHITMAN
 6 YAKIMA

COMMENTS:

To be certain that the number of respondents from King, Snohomish and Pierce Counties did not overly influence the answer to question #5 (which counties should have priority for inclusion in the Forest Legacy Program?), Department staff did the following:

assumed each respondent from those three counties voted their county as first priority

multiplied the number of respondents from each of those counties by five points (the maximum possible points they could have voted for their county of residence), and deducted that number from each county's total point value

Example: King County had a total of 274 points; 23 respondents were from King County (23 X 5 points = 115 points).

274 total points - 115 possible resident points
 = 159 adjusted total points

Results: Even after deducting the maximum possible points that residents could have voted, the same three counties still received the most total points in question #5. So, not counting the maximum possible resident points:

Snohomish	193 total points
Pierce	164 total points
King	159 total points

185 TOTAL RESPONDENTS